

One Year and Two Weeks Ago in Figure Four Weekly plus ordering information  
by Bryan Alvarez

NOTE: This issue is being republished by request since it apparently disappeared when the site crashed a few weeks ago.

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One Year Ago in Figure Four Weekly

Seeing as to how it's the end of one millennium and the beginning of another, I thought I would take some time this week to write a short poem on the state of professional wrestling at the end of the 20th century. Decades from now, historians will look back on this poem and have a better understanding of how fans, and in particular myself, viewed the sport at the turn of the century. In fact, someday I hope it can achieve the immortality of other famous historical documents like the Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence, and the Weekly World News.

Wrestling at the Dawn of the 21st Century

Wrestling in this country sucks  
Vince's stock lost big bucks  
Thirteen hours of wrestling a week  
Chyna is a scary freak  
Pay-per-views are over-priced  
Vince McMahon: the Antichrist  
Guys like Hall still make big cash  
Rob Van Dam can do a splash  
Dynamite says Bret smoked crack  
Kevin Nash can't do jack  
Godfather has some nappy ho's  
Wrestling in this country blows

Goldberg jobs to limo window

Bill Goldberg suffered a major forearm injury when he went mad while filming a skit for Thunder. The incident occurred near the end of the show as Goldberg was chasing Bret Hart out of the building. Bret hopped into a car and zoomed off. Goldberg, irate, looked around and noticed Vince Russo's white limousine sitting off to the side. He was supposed to punch in a few windows as the limo prepared to drive off. Unfortunately, one of the windows missed its spot and didn't break. Goldberg responded by hitting it repeatedly with his elbow. Finally, the window broke and a shard of glass carved its way into Goldberg's arm. Goldberg then started pounding

at the hood of the limo, which resulted in blood pouring everywhere. At this point the show went off the air.

Everybody immediately sensed something was wrong since Goldberg's arm was pouring blood like a fountain. More than one witness said they thought for sure he'd severed a tendon or suffered some major ligament damage since the cut looked so disgusting. A few had flashbacks to Fit Finley's leg injury earlier this year. Goldberg was immediately taken to the hospital where surgery was performed. As it turned out, there wasn't any major damage and Goldberg will probably only miss about a month of action. He was fitted with a cast last week and will have to wear it for three more.

The injury also resulted in WCW having to pull him from the New Japan Tokyo Dome show on January 4th where he was scheduled to wrestle Rick Steiner. WCW announced Monday that they would be sending over Randy Savage as a replacement. It was a fair trade because Goldberg vs. Rick Steiner on a New Japan card doesn't mean jack, and Randy Savage vs. Rick Steiner means just slightly less than jack.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

From Jim Cornette

I am in receipt of information from the Internet as follows:

"Bryan Alvarez of the Figure Four Weekly newsletter reports that the WWF developmental signings continue and they have signed OVW high flyer Mike Samples, recommended to the WWF by the head of the WWF's new Dojo, Jim Cornette, and also in talks for a deal is another Indy star, Ian Rotten. (seen originally at the PWI Newsboard, posted by "Mikey G." —Miss P.)

This ridiculous, needless dissemination of false, fabricated information, this easily-disproven piece of "reporting", is why so many experienced wrestling personnel continue to look down their noses at wrestling newsletters and reporters as a bunch of "marks". Why else would someone report as fact something that is so ludicrous on the face of it without even attempting to confirm the story? If any of you really consider yourself "journalists", you would know that that is the first rule of journalism.

FOR THE RECORD — Mike Samples is not currently a friend of Ohio Valley Wrestling due to a business relationship gone bad a few years ago. Mike Samples would not be welcome in an OVW locker room by the management or most of the talent. Mike was not recommended for a deal by me, nor to my most recent knowledge has he ever been considered for one. Mike's most grandiose description of his style would not include the phrase "high flyer". There IS no "WWF Dojo". The Dojo name was adopted because Marti Funk speaks Japanese and the Internet fans are marks for Japanese style. It is a training center.

As for Ian Rotten — Ian Rotten's contribution to the business of professional wrestling has been to:

- (1) have the sport banned in National Guard armories in the state of Indiana, as well as individual schools and facilities in several states,
- (2) have had his promoter's license revoked by the state of Kentucky because of the distasteful, disgusting nature of his shows, added extra regulations to the responsible promoters in the state because of his antics,
- (3) have gotten media publicity that points to professional wrestlers as a bunch of crazed, self-mutilating freaks and its fans as bloodthirsty subhumans.

In that process he has proven himself of questionable sanity as he disfigures his body for a hardcore subculture of about 250 fans nationwide who worship his shenanigans.

The mainstream response to the question "Who is Ian Rotten?" would peg him as a member of a washed-up English punk band of the '80's. The WWF would never extend an offer of employment to someone of his ilk, and I personally would sever the WWF/OVW relationship before booking him on a single OVW card.

Danny Davis, the owner of Ohio Valley Wrestling, has this official stance on competition in the market:

"We operate OVW to provide the best wrestling we can to the fans in the area. It is a free country, and anyone who is licensed can run a show here. We will not acknowledge competitors, nor hinder, stop, or badmouth other promoter's shows. We do not allow our talent to work for other promoters in our area. We wish any responsible, professional promoter well. But we will always do anything we can to prevent someone from harming the business for ALL its promoters and talent."

Hopefully this sets the record straight.

WE ARE SORRY

From Figure Four Weekly

Well, first off, the report by "Mikey G" added some information that was not present in the original report here in the newsletter. We never claimed that Mike Samples was a "high flyer" or that Ohio Valley was the "WWF's new dojo". Nor did we ever use the term "Indy star" in reference to Ian Rotten.

However, we did report the rest, and we apologize for passing false information on to our readers. Our source for the story, Buddy Wayne, who ironically also wrestled for Ohio Valley Wrestling, expressed deep regret in the days following this story's publication. He deeply

regretted not seeing the look on Jim Cornette's face when he read the original report and wrote this tirade. Buddy has also pledged to only pass on true and accurate information about Mike Samples and Ian Rotten in the future.

#### Guilt trip

Beginning this week, we are cutting out the Heat and WCW Saturday Night TV reports. From now on, we will only focus on Nitro, Raw, Thunder, Smackdown and ECW on TNN. The reason for this is that nothing ever really happens on the "B" shows that effects the "A" shows.

With this change, I will have more room to talk about news and go into depth on the major TV shows. Some people hate the TV reports, but most of pro-wrestling revolves around them so I feel they are important to cover. Also, be aware that a lot of news finds its way into the TV reports, so if you skip them, you are missing out on some of the value of this newsletter. That would be a shame.

Also, a kind word to WCW. Had you not turned Thunder into an "A" show, I would have never watched that shitty program again.

#### Internet Quote of the Week

"I ate some of my stashed food for Y2K today. I am now typing on a full belly. I see that Nostradamus was wrong about July so I am eating. God help me if I am wrong."

#### Special Thanks

I would like to thank the following individuals for their help in putting Figure Four Weekly together: Gladys Gibson, Carlos and Valerie Alvarez, Dave Meltzer, Craig Proper, Brent Kremen, Mike Rodgers, Tadashi Tanaka, Natina Schulz, Koji Yamamoto, Peter Stein, Mike Loreface, Carlos Loera, John Courville, Brian Schenk, Bruce Mitchell, Mike Mooneyham, Bob Barnett, Georgiann Makropolous.

#### WWF News and Notes

- Matt Hardy broke his face on Raw last Monday and will be out of action for awhile. It's not really clear what part of his face he broke, which is why I generalized. He told friends that he broke his orbital bone, while the WWF website claimed he broke his nose and cheekbone. Either way, the injury was the result of a particularly stiff dropkick. He has been going to house shows and TV accompanying his brother to ringside.
- Stephanie was on the Byte This audio show last week talking about her new character. She said she loved being bad. They asked her if there were any problems between her and Chyna

now that she was being all kissy with Hunter. Stephanie said that she didn't know because she generally kept her distance from Chyna. She did say Hunter was cool and funny. This has to be the beginning of a work. She also noted that she had more respect for Chyna than for anyone else in the company with the exception of her dad. She said Vince was a cool dad and supported her a lot growing up. Actually, when you look at how his kids turned out, Vince and Linda must have done a pretty good job. Vince, by the way, has booked himself on the final Byte This of the Millennium.

- SkyTV in the UK re-signed a five-year deal with the WWF last week. Per the new deal, they will air the following pay-per-views: No Way Out, WrestleMania, Judgement Day, King of the Ring, SummerSlam, Unforgiven, No Mercy and Survivor Series. There is some talk that Channel 4 will get the rights to Royal Rumble, Backlash, Fully Loaded and Armageddon. As far as the television is concerned, Sky Sports will air Raw and Smackdown at various times and Channel 4 will air Heat. Insiders sources tell me several UK stations will continue to air gratuitous nudity at various times throughout the day.

- Brent Kremen is our Cheapskate of the Week after stating that he will buy the Mick Foley book once it comes out in paperback.

- We will no longer be doing a Sunday Night Heat report because, frankly, nothing ever happens on that show. There are good matches sometimes, but mostly it's just a recap show. There were only two things of note this week. First, they heavily hyped up the Man on the Moon movie and, in particular, Lawler's role. There were comments taped at the premiere with Danny DeVito, Jim Carrey and Milos Forman. There was also a very quick shot of Miss Kitty and Lawler together, which for some reason I thought was pretty neat. The only other thing of note was during the Headbangers vs. Too Cool match. The Headbangers, apparently in an effort to get over with the 18-24 male demographic, have begun wearing stuffed bras to the ring. At one point, Thrasher pulled out whatever was in his bra and hit Scotty with it. Brian Christopher then jumped in the ring and very audibly screamed to the referee: "He pulled a tit out!" I found that hilarious.

- No ratings this week due to the Christmas holiday. We will have them in next week's issue. Overnight ratings indicate WWF killed WCW by a wide margin yet again. Also, next week's ratings will be delayed as well due to the New Year's holiday.

## WWF On Tour

Charlotte, NC (December 26): Godfather & Jerry Lawler d. Midian & Viscera. Lawler was said to look good in the ring. Edge & Christian & Jeff Hardy d. Dudleys & Too Cool. Matt was there but couldn't work due to his broken head. Kurt Angle d. D-Lo Brown, Val Venis d. Prince Albert, Chris Jericho d. Al Snow, Rock d. Hunter Hearst Helmsely, Phatu d. Joey Abs, Road Dogg d. Test, Acolytes d. Hollys, Giant d. Kane. They made an announcement at the beginning of the show that Bossman wouldn't be able to compete due to injury and the crowd popped like mad.

## WWF On Television

WWF Smackdown (December 23 — Taped December 21): Mick Foley called a talent meeting backstage. He said the Helmsely/McMahon era sucked. He said it was time for everyone in the WWF to take a stand. Stephanie walked in, looking cross. Also, whoreish. She said she was pissed at HHH and was taking over. She said she didn't care if anyone believed her, and signed Test vs. Road Dogg, Al Snow vs. Rock in a cage and Foley vs. Big Show for the WWF Title with Hunter suspended 15 feet over the ring in a shark cage. The reason Hunter was in a shark cage was because Stephanie feared Show would try to eat him. The stupid wrestlers fell for all of this. By the way, when this report is over, go back and read it again to see how little of the major storyline makes sense... Chris Jericho beat Bob Holly—DQ when Crash interfered with the IC Title. Chyna ran down and helped Chris clear the ring... Backstage, Stephanie talked Kane into being her bodyguard for the evening by promising him a match with X-Pac on Raw... Phatu beat Viscera. Hideous. Too Cool came out and danced afterwards, which got a big pop. What a strange gimmick... Rock threatened to kill Al Snow. I know I say this every week, but he was CRAZY over... Test d. Road Dogg clean. No, that's not a type, Test actually won a match clean... Hunter confronted Steph. She signed Billy vs. Kane. Billy freaked out. Hunter said he wasn't getting into any damn cage. She had cops come in and escort him away... By the way, Steph also said the "sex was great" with HHH. So remember that when all is said and done and Vince tries to put her over as being virginal again... Kurt Angle d. Edge. They said Edge was from "Toronto, Canada", which is like saying I'm from "Bothell, United States". Blackman interfered for the finish. After the match, Steph yelled at Blackman for getting involved with Angle's business... Stephanie told Al Snow that he'd get a title shot Monday if he beat Rock in the cage match... Snow didn't beat Rock. This was actually a pretty good cage match, and Rock bumped for once in his life. He even did a back superplex at one point. Great heat for this match... Ivory came down and whined that the WWF is not adult entertainment. She called out Kitty and demanded a no-rules match for the WWF Women's Title. Kitty and Chyna came out. Since it was no-rules, Chyna took Kitty's place. Chyna killed Ivory and then Kitty got the pin. Thankfully short... Posse gave Kaientai some match tips. Hopefully, they weren't listening... Jeff Hardy & Christian d. Kaientai. Good as expected with those four in there. Kaientai attacked Posse afterwards, apparently for giving them bad match tips... Kane beat Billy clean. Sucks to be Billy... Backstage, Kane found Road Dogg and tried to choke the shiznit out of him. Dogg revealed that Tori was with Kane at the airport Marriot. Kane zoomed off... Mark Henry beat Bubba Ray Dudley. Bubba got some classic Dudley cheap heat before this match. He also dropped Henry RIGHT ON HIS HEAD with a backdrop driver in a really scary spot. Moolah and Mae helped Henry get the win... Mankind NC Big Show. Pretty bad, although there was one DOPE spot where Mankind wrapped a chair around Piggy's head, and they also did the spot where Mankind was — and this is ironic — riding piggyback and Show fell backwards and squashed him. Midway through, the cage lowered and Hunter managed to escape. Steph, who was doing commentary, acted concerned. She jumped in the ring to yell at her hubby. Mankind went after Hunter but HHH pulled Steph in front of him. Steph then kicked Mankind in the yarbles, which was the signal for DX to come out and beat up the good guys. Hunter and Steph hugged, revealing the alarming news that IT WAS A SWERVE ALL ALONG. Well, no shit. The fans

showed their appreciation by chanting "SLUT!" at the angelic Stephanie. Hunter closed the show by saying he had two words for us: "MERRY CHRISTMAS!" How nice.

Raw is War (December 27 — Live): Have I ever mentioned that the production for Raw is out of this world?... DX came down to the ring. Hunter said that DX had one goal left to accomplish, and that was in regards to the WWF title. For some reason, the rubes began chanting "ROCKY!" at this point despite the fact that Rock, currently, doesn't hold one single title in the WWF. Helmsely kind of lost it for a bit here and began saying some really weird stuff. Stephanie then signed X-Pac vs. Kane for later on in the evening, saying she'd promised it to Kane on Smackdown and wasn't one to go back on her word. X-Pac looked pissed. Hunter then started running down Mankind. Foley came out on the ramp and said DX used to be cool, but had turned into cowards. He tried to turn the rest of DX against Hunter and Stephanie, noting that the swerve on Smackdown had resulted in both the Outlaws getting beat up and X-Pac having to wrestle Kane on Raw. Hunter and DX jumped Mankind. Rock ran down to the ring to make the save. DX fled up the ramp. Hunter then went mad and said there wasn't room for the three of them (DX, Rock and Mankind) in the WWF. He signed a "pink slip on a pole" match between Rock and Mankind for later in the show, with the loser being fired. This was a good segment... Kane was shown backstage waiting for Tori to arrive... Chyna came down to the ring and called out Crash. Chyna beat him out of nowhere. Weird and pointless... Tori arrived. She told Kane that her weekend with X-Pac was fabulous and that he was a perfect gentleman. She said X-Pac gave her lots of presents and would have let her leave at any time, but she stayed to honor Kane's word. Also, X-Pac's penis wasn't all burnt up. OK, I made that one up. Kane didn't look happy about any of this. Tori said she'd go get him some coffee... Backstage, Test walked up to Tori as she was getting coffee. He put his arm around her in a friendly manner and she freaked out. She bolted from the room, thus totally killing Test's confidence in his ability to ever get a girlfriend... Dudleys beat Acolytes and Godfather & D-Lo Brown and Edge & Christian. Joey Abs was the special referee for the match and Pete Gas was the timekeeper. Rodney did ring introductions and called the Acolytes the greatest team of all time ever. What a suck up. Dudleys ended up getting the win when the Posse attacked Bradshaw outside the ring and Joey fast-counted Faarooq. Uh oh. So much for sucking up. The Acolytes absolutely destroyed the Posse with another stiff beating after the match. I guess everyone has to pay their dues somehow... A freaked-out Tori told Kane backstage that Test had "violated" her. Kane responded by emitting his polar bear roar. Actually, this was more of a Kodiak bear roar. Tori set new standards for pathetic acting in this segment. As for Kane, that bear in "Legends of the Fall" had a more convincing angry roar. Then again, that was a real bear... Tori and Kane confronted Hunter backstage. Tori said that she wanted Kane to wrestle the rapist Test, as opposed to X-Pac. Hunter said OK. What an idiot that Kane is. He should have known Test didn't violate Tori, because everybody knows that there is no rape in the WWF. Also, why didn't he just watch the goddamn replay they showed a half dozen times on the TitanTron? I figure the angle here is that Tori lied about Test touching her so that Kane would face Test and not her little greasy sweetheart X-Pac. In other words, Tori is turning heel for sure... Backstage, Stephanie was pissed that HHH booked Kurt Angle vs. Headbangers in a handicap match. Angle won, somehow. I literally left the room for no more than 10 seconds and the match was over. Steve Blackman did something or other. Backstage, Steph expressed joy that Angle was still

undefeated. Hunter said he could kill him. You know where this is leading don't you? Angle vs. Hunter for the WWF Title with Stephanie screwing over Angle in the end and destroying his win streak... Al Snow came down to the ring and said he was going to shoot. His shocking, shoot announcement was that he hated every single one of the fans. Hey, Al, KAYFABE! Al beat Chris Jericho via DQ when Chyna hit Al with Head. Jericho was over as a total face here... Mark Henry talked Harvey Whippleman into going out on a double date with Mae and Moolah. Harvey finally said OK. What followed was some really stupid skits, even by WWF standards... Rock beat Mankind in the "pink slip on a pole" match. The rules were that whomever got the pink slip was the winner and the other guy would get fired. So remember, next time your boss gives you a pink slip, tell him you're the winner and a co-worker must be fired immediately. Finish saw both guys brawl on the top rope and then Mankind took this scary flip bump all the way to the floor and died. Rock climbed up and grabbed the slip for the win. Crowd chanted "FOLEY!" afterwards. He cut a promo and said it was no secret that he planned on calling it quits in the year 2000. He told everyone to "Have a nice day!" and left to a standing ovation. You stupid marks... Mick said goodbye to everyone backstage... Prince Albert & Ivory d. Jackie & Viscera and Gangrel & Luna and Val Venis & Kat when Albert pinned Venis. Everybody gets their win back eventually... X-Pac beat Jeff Hardy clean in a damn good little match. I was so happy... Test came down to the ring for his match with Kane. He said he never touched Tori, but he'd fight Kane if that's what he wanted. Kane apparently did want to fight since he attacked Test. Test won via DQ when Kane shoved the referee. Kane tombstoned Test after the match and then Tori slapped his prone body around. Kane is whipped... Outlaws d. Too Cool when X-Pac helped. Rakishi absolutely destroyed DX after the match and sent them packing. Then they did their dizzope dance... HHH and Stephanie had security take Mankind out of the building... Giant beat Helmsely in the main event. Everybody expected Hunter to get the title back here, BUT THEY SWERVED US! It may have been better for business, but goddamn it, the 3% of smart fans knew so they decided to change the finish. I assume they'll just give it to Hunter at the Smackdown show. After a bunch of nearfalls and interference by DX, Mankind came back and hit Hunter with a chair, allowing Show to get the win with the chokeslam. I thought security took Mankind away? Whatever. Overall, a good Raw.

## WCW News and Notes

- The original plan for Souled Out was apparently going to be Bret Hart vs. Goldberg for the WCW title. When WCW learned of Goldberg's four-week downtime following surgery, they contacted both Hulk Hogan and Ric Flair about coming back early to take on Bret. Both guys said no. Flair wants out of the company bad, but likely won't get it. His contract only requires him to wrestle through February 9, 2000, at which point he's only required to be a goodwill ambassador for the company. I'm not sure why Hogan didn't want to come back. He's always been acutely aware of when to come and when to go to ensure that the ratings appear to react positively to his presence. Because of the television changes, the ratings for both shows are going to go up next month no matter what. With Nitro dropping its third hour, the overall rating for the show should begin hovering between 3.4 and 3.8 even if they don't gain one new viewer. Thunder's rating will go up as well once the show moves to Wednesday because they won't



have Smackdown to compete with. So this would be a perfect time for Hogan to come back, since he could claim that the ratings increased due to his return. By the way, for you investors, the Raw and Smackdown ratings are going to go up as well since Smackdown will be unopposed and the Raw show will be unopposed in the second hour. With ratings going up across the board, the mainstream media is going to think wrestling is going into another boom period, so buy WWFE stock now. Besides, it can't go much lower. Anyway, with both guys saying no to the Souled Out main event, WCW settled on Sid as the challenger. Bret is one of a select few who has had good matches with Sid in the past, so we'll see if he's still got it. Also on the show will be three matches involving Chris Benoit. I kid you not. He'll face Jeff Jarrett in a Dungeon Rules match, then a Bunkhouse Brawl, and finally a "caged heat" match. This show goes on the permanent tape for sure. Sometimes, it is so hard to hate Vince Russo. The original plan was actually for the Dungeon Rules match to be replaced with a 30-minute Iron Man match, but WCW felt that it would be too hard for the crowd to get into the other two matches after seeing them wrestle for 30 straight minutes. Hopefully they'll do a marathon match somewhere down the road, maybe at SuperBrawl.

- Shawn Stasiak signed a deal with WCW last week and should be debuting shortly. Knowing Russo's propensity for booking people who hate each other in matches and things of that sort, I wouldn't be surprised if Stasiak got some sort of gimmick where he carries around a tape recorder.
- Scott Hall, Kevin Nash and Bret Hart are said to not be particularly enamored with Jeff Jarrett. You can add them to the list of several others in WCW, mostly mid-carders, who see Jarrett as a guy who never really got over to any degree in the WWF and has been thrust to the top in the last few months because he's buddies with Vince Russo. To Jeff's credit, he has been doing a very good job and has had some really good matches lately.
- Hall will be going in for knee surgery on January 3rd. Since he is expected to be out of action for two months or so, WCW did the logical thing and booked his team to advance in the WCW Lethal Lottery Tag Team Tournament. Don't ask me, ask Russo, he's the genius. In another strange irony, Hall was "suspended" from WCW Monday for making babyface comments during the NWO interview on Thunder. You see, Russo wants the new NWO to be bad guy dickface heels and not cool guys that everyone cheers. Hall, during the interview, did the old survey, which got a huge babyface response. The survey was edited awkwardly off the show and Hall was reprimanded. You see, a person can show up in no condition to perform or disappear for months at a time and still have a job when he returns, but if he cuts a babyface promo when he's a heel, he'll be suspended. Oh yeah, he's suspended with pay. That'll teach that Scott Hall. The guys in WCW were told that this decision was made to "send a message" to everyone that this kind of behavior would not be tolerated. Never mind that Hall could not have worked for two months anyway or that he is being paid to sit at home and do nothing. This is **HARDCORE DISCIPLINE**.
- I missed the E! True Hollywood Story on Hulk Hogan because my crappy cable company doesn't get the E! Channel. But the following report, which I swear I'm not making up, appeared

on my answering machine Tuesday: "It was the greatest documentary of all time, fitting for the greatest wrestler of all time. You better say something in your newsletter coming up this week, or you're going to get it, brother."

- The POWERS THAT BE gimmick is going to be heavily toned down from this point forward. Russo never even made an appearance on Nitro at all, and they began heavily pushing the faceless Bill Busch, who absolutely nobody but the 3% of insider fans know, as the WCW President. I still wonder what the casual fan thinks while watching WCW programming.
- Dallas Page will be out for awhile after having a skin cancer growth removed from his chest last week. This is the main reason they shot the angle where he said he wouldn't wrestle again until he got a match with Buff Bagwell. The match is scheduled for the Souled Out PPV, and Page will probably be there, but it's not 100% definite. He'd had the growth for awhile and his doctor suggested he have it removed soon before it developed into something worse. He asked the doctor if he could do it during a time when he had eight days off, and the doctor said he'd probably have to be on the shelf for several weeks. So it's touch and go at this point in regards to the PPV match.
- Apparently there was some very strong language that made its way past the censors on Nitro last Monday. The reason I say "apparently" is because I didn't notice it. You see, I get the West Coast feed over here in Seattle, so pretty much everything that was supposed to be bleeped out was. However, everyone who saw the original live feed heard some pretty dastardly language. For what its worth, here is WCW's official explanation: "Monday evening some strong language aired live on WCW Monday Nitro. The reason for this occurrence was a network delay booth operator [who] did not report to work on Monday evening. This absence was not immediately realized due to the fact that the Broadcast Operation Center and the delay booth are located in different areas of the building. Once the personnel shortage was realized, the BOC took action to staff the delay booth. The network has taken corrective measures to prevent this type of incident from happening again in the future. There was no intent by WCW or the network to allow offensive language to air on the program." A couple of things to clear up. First off, all the swearing on the show was planned in advance. WCW even admitted this to others. They wanted an edgy show with people losing their cool to get over the importance of the Big Angle. However, they appear to be sincere in their claim that they didn't mean for it to get through. First, Ted Turner was on Larry King Live just days earlier and made it very clear that, unlike the WWF, his wrestling company didn't stoop to using soiled themes like crude language. If you think anyone in WCW would intentionally embarrass Ted by allowing foul language to air on Nitro just days after he made this statement, you're crazy. Second, and most convincing, like anyone in WCW could ever come up with an excuse that creative.
- Midajah, who is a hot fitness model that has done pictorials for magazines such as MuscleMag and Ironman, announced on her website last week that she has signed a deal with WCW to become the newest Nitro Girl.

- Mean Gene said on his Hotline report last Saturday that Torrie and Kidman were seeing each other off-screen. That cannot be true because I can't believe she'd cheat on me. Actually, in all seriousness, I'm pretty sure she's had a steady boyfriend for quite awhile, so as far as I know Gene is full of it as usual.
- Axl Rotten was talking to people last week in an attempt to get a job in WCW. The word is that his chances are pretty slim.
- We have more information on the talent meeting in Milwaukee that addressed folks showing up late. Apparently, WCW mailed a letter to everyone telling them that they would be fined if they showed up late for television. Bill Busch, who could not make it to the Milwaukee show, asked JJ Dillon to call a meeting and tell everyone about the letter so they wouldn't be surprised when it showed up in their mail box (even Bill Busch knows how slow the US Mail is). At the meeting, Dillon told everyone that things were different now and that it was very important that everybody arrive on time so they could film whatever pre-taped segments they were involved in for Nitro. He told everybody that the policy would arrive in their mailboxes soon, and implied that it would not go into effect until everyone received it. In other words, Luger and Liz probably weren't fined for showing up late to this particular meeting.

## WCW On Television

Thursday Thunder (December 23 — Taped December 21): The show opened with the NWO coming down to the ring. Bret ran down the fans, telling them they'd fallen for a month-long swerve. They narrated a history video on the TurnerTron. Some of the inside commentary was pretty funny although I'm sure it went over a lot of heads. The video pretty much made sense. Nash ran down the fans and drew some cheap heat. They must have done something really naughty at this point because WCW immediately cut away to crowd shots and changed the audio track. Weird. Jeff Jarrett cut a promo saying there wouldn't be any weak links in this NWO, as the rest of the guys looked at him like he was a weak link. Goldberg came out and said he was going to kill them one by one. There was a light "Goldberg sucks!" chant in here... Hudson, Tenay and Schiavone were shown at the announce table. Tenay, in the line of the night, said Tony was "sitting in" for Juvie. BWAHAHAHAHA!... Leia Meow (Kimona) was shown stretching backstage. Whoa... Benoit cut a promo backstage. He said he used to love Bret like a brother. Fans booed. Benoit added that he was going to rip Bret's throat out. The crowd liked that one... PG-13 came out and rapped to the wrong kind of heat. Varsity Club NC PG-13 when I guess the ref just got sick of watching the match. It was a good thing because I was sick of it too... Russo was shown in his office talking to Hennig. Remember when Roddy Piper destroyed the office on Nitro, revealing it to be just a set? Well, Russo took all the broken-down walls, transported them to Thunder, and put his office back together again. There were holes in the walls and everything. What a cheap bastard. It also shows he hasn't gotten a bonus for increasing the ratings yet. He told Curt that he'd used everyone like La Parka and Creative Control. Suddenly, Control ran into the room wearing biker's outfits and threatened to kill Russo. Then they left. They appeared angry... Filthy Animals and Duggan came down to the ring. They

all said stuff. Rey threatened to hump the Revolution. He is filthy. Eddy said the Animals were all Americans, at which point Konnan actually chuckled. Hacksaw said he was going to make the Revolution his personal "HOOOOO!" That was the funniest line of Duggan's career. Revolution came out and Douglas said they were going to force Hacksaw to renounce America... Russo signed Hennig & Jarrett vs. Creative Control. Russo told Hennig he'd be hanging out in the parking lot in his white limo, where it was safe... Tank killed La Parka. He punched him out and La Parka legit got a concussion when his head smashed into the guardrail. Security ran down and Tank punched out Doug Dillinger for good measure. Finally, they did something right with Tank, and the crowd popped big for the carnage... An Artist Formerly Known as Prince laukea recording session aired. Hideous... Norman Smiley beat Fit Finley. Knobs attacked Norman but Meng made the save. Meng beat up both guys and put Norman on top of Finley for the pin. Norman hugged Meng's leg after. Meng must have thought Norman was trying to hump him like Rey Jr. because he put the death grip on him immediately... Goldberg grabbed Jarrett backstage. He told him to tell Bret that the carnage began soon. Goldberg added that he was going to eat Bret's heart. Goldberg must have been watching tapes of Snow White backstage... Control beat Curt Hennig. Jeff Jarrett never showed up so this was a squash. Control said they would now be known as Ron and Don, the Harris Boys. NWO beat up the Harris' afterwards and they were taken to the hospital... Maestro d. Bam Bam Bigelow. Kanyon did commentary and was funny. Kanyon hit Bam Bam with a Championship belt of some sort leading to the pin. Biggs also took a champagne bottle shot to the head by Bigelow... DDP cut a promo backstage with Gene. Gene was horny as usual and wanted to know the details about Kimberly. Page recapped the whole story and then said he wasn't wrestling until he got a match with Bagwell. Then he left the building... Evan Karagias came to the ring with Shannon Moore and Shane Helms to debut their new band, 3-Count. They danced poorly as an awful music video played. Tony said the tune was catchy. Where's Juvie when you need him? If WCW thought they had problems with Lenny and Lodi, wait until they hear the response these guys are going to get. Chavo attacked them to a huge pop... Misfits and Vampiro attacked David and Daphne at a gas station. The attendant, named Crowbar (Devon Storm), made the save... Filthy Animals & Jim Duggan d. Revolution. Duggan is even less mobile than the crippled Rey Jr. Speaking of crippled, Saturn gave Kidman an exploder and Kidman landed RIGHT SMACK DAB ON HIS NOGGIN. I thought he was dead FOR SURE after that one. So did everyone else in the match. That was so scary. Animals won with a double sunset flip spot. Revolution beat them up after the match. There was GREAT heat for all of this... Wall d. Nash—DQ when Scott Hall ran in. Nash worked fairly hard for a change. NWO killed Wall after... After commercial, they tried to put Wall in an ambulance and he went berserk... Goldberg beat up Hall in the trainer's office and then punked Nash, who was in the shower. Apparently, there is a cameraman who films guys while they are in the shower. This was so hokey... Chris Benoit d. Bret Hart—DQ when Jarrett ran in with a guitar. This was a good short match. Goldberg ran down to make the save. Bret fled, but Jarrett ate the spear. Goldberg then chased Bret backstage. Bret fled in a car. Goldberg's injury occurred here. The best Thunder in a loooong time.

WCW Monday Nitro (December 27 — Live): Bret Hart, Kevin Nash and Jeff Jarrett arrived... They showed clips of Goldberg's injury on Thunder. Tenay said he had shredded a tendon and would be out of action for several weeks. I saw clips of this incident for the first time and all I've

got to say is YUCKY... Tony Schiavone announced that Bill Busch, who is now officially the WCW President even though he's never been on TV and only 3% of fans have any clue who he is, had stripped the Outsiders of the WCW Tag Team Titles. No, it wasn't due to the 30-day rule. No, they hadn't beaten up a referee in their last title defense (actually, they probably did). The reason they were stripped of the Tag Titles was because "nobody knew where Scott Hall was at, not even Kevin Nash". What fabulous logic. Why couldn't they just say Scott hurt his knee and wouldn't be able to work for a few months? They announced a Lethal Lottery Tag Title Tournament with men being paired up randomly to form teams. Tenay also said the Scott Steiner was going to have to announce his retirement on the show. According to Tenay, Steiner's doctor said his back wasn't healing properly and that he'd probably need another surgery... Kanyon came out to do commentary for the opening match. They gave him this horrible headset that was totally muffled, but he still said some funny stuff. Bam Bam Bigelow faced Brian Knobs. They brawled through the crowd and Kanyon followed them with his portable headset. He had some funny lines including: "Move it, you marks!" and "I'm a wrestler, you ass!" Kanyon hit Bigelow with his mysterious title belt for the pinfall, but the cameras didn't catch it and the announcers didn't call it. But trust me, it happened... NWO yelled at JJ Dillon backstage for informing them of Bill Busch's decision. Dillon said he was only the messenger. NWO beat him up. Didn't that result in a fine at one point?... NWO checked out their new Monster Truck in the parking lot... Sid came down to the ring and said some naughty words. He said: "It's time for Big Sid to step up to the plate!" I knew it was almost softball season again. Sid announced that he'd face Bret Hart for the title at Souled Out. Benoit came out and announced his three-match series with Jeff Jarrett at the PPV — a Bunkhouse match, a Dungeon Rules match and a Caged Heat match. Two wins out of three takes the series... NWO graffiti Sid's car and performed some other elementary carnage... Buzzkill & Mike Rotundo d. Dean Malenko & Kidman when Duggan ran in and hit Malenko with a 2x4 behind the referee's back. Amazing how the luck of the draw managed to pair up two men who hated each other and were feuding. Buzzkill walked out on his partner during this match as well... NWO pulled the plug on the production truck, so the screen was snowy for awhile. Someone must have watched "Man on the Moon" over the weekend... Scott Steiner arrived in a wheelchair. His brother wheeled him into the building... They announced that Tank Abbott had been fined \$10,000 for punching out Doug Dillinger last week. It was worth it... Tank killed Shane in seconds. One punch knockout. It was funny because Shane was down there dead and the referee, instead of ruling it a knockout, decided to raise and drop his arm three times. Dumb. The other funny thing is that Dave Meltzer went on a tirade on the Eyada show about how stupid Vince Russo was for not knowing how to use Tank Abbott successfully, and the next day on WCW Live Russo ran down Meltzer and called him an idiot and a jackass. Well, a week later, Russo was booking Tank exactly the way Dave suggested... A Scott Steiner tribute video aired. This was one of the classiest videos WCW has ever produced. Remember that... Rick wheeled Scott down to the ring. Scott gingerly stepped through the ropes with the aid of a cane. Rick gave him a hug and left. Scott broke down instantly. He said that he'd had a whole speech prepared but found out that the final walk down the aisle was harder than he thought it would be. Scott told the story about his doctor and said he was going to have to retire. "SCOTTY!" the yahoos screamed. Scott totally lost it for a second but regained his composure. He said the hardest part of having to retire was that he'd never be able to team with his brother again. Even Rick looked like he was going to cry. Scott

then asked the fans to say a prayer for him, and they popped big. Suddenly, the NWO came down to the ring. Bret told Scott to get the hell out of there, adding that he was "never very good anyway". Tremendous heat. The NWO tossed his wheelchair out of the ring and told him to get lost. Bret grabbed the mic and said fans should not be appreciative of Steiner's career, but rather that Bret was still the WCW Heavyweight Champion. NUCLEAR heat. Jarrett destroyed the cue card guy with a guitar shot and then they went to commercial. When they came back, NWO was still in the ring. Nash ran down Bill Busch and promised that Scott was going to be there later. They said a bunch of stuff that got bleeped. Bret ran down Sid for awhile. Suddenly, Sid and Benoit drove Sid's car down the aisle. They hopped out and beat up the NWO with bats. As the NWO fled, Curt Hennig ran down and attacked the good guys. Sid destroyed him and threw him over the top rope onto the hood of the car. Hennig ended up being taken away in an ambulance. This was a very good heated segment from start to finish... Lash Laroux & Midnight d. Harlem Heat in another Lethal Lottery match. What an astounding coincidence that Booker T and Stevie Ray, by the luck of the draw, ended up as partners. They teased a ton of dissension between Heat, and Stevie finally snapped and hit Booker, Midnight and Lash with his slapjack. Lash fell on top of Booker and got the pin. So Harlem Heat has broken up again. Yawn... The guy in the Scream outfit attacked Chavo backstage. Don't know who it is. Frankly, don't care... A Revolution skit in Washington DC aired. There were actually a couple of these scattered throughout the show and they were mostly funny. Shane is a particularly humorous guy sometimes with his heelish overacting... Some Power Plant guys were shown sitting in the front row. They all had the classic Power Plant physique. Tony said they were the future of WCW. That's good to know... Bret Hart beat Jerry Flynn to retain the WCW Title. You read that right. And, in addition, Jeff Jarrett had to help Bret out by hitting Flynn with a baseball bat. Tank Abbott came out after the match, helped Flynn to his feet, and then sucker punched him... Insider sources theorize that Bret could defend the title next week against Al Greene... Nash was shown on the phone with Scott, pleading for him to show up at the Arena... The official announcement was finally made that Nitro would be moving from 8:00 to 10:00 beginning on January 3rd. WHOO-HOO!... Rick Steiner & Berlyn beat PG-13. What an astonishing coincidence that JC Ice and Wolfie D ended up being put together by random drawing. Berlyn walked out on his partner, which would be the third time that happened so far this evening, so Rick beat both guys all by himself. He continued to kill them after the match and the referee finally reversed the decision, so PG-13 won. What great booking... Norman Smiley & Asya d. Jim Duggan & Saturn. What an astonishing coincidence that someone from the Revolution would be teamed with Jim Duggan. In another shocker, DUGGAN TURNED ON HIS PARTNER leading to the finish. We hadn't see that one yet. Duggan beat up Saturn after the match with his board. Duggan's family then hit the ring and proceeded to RAPE HIM WITH THE US FLAG. OK, I made that up, they celebrated. But I wouldn't put that angle past Russo... Jeff Jarrett beat Kidman in a very good match to retain the US Title. The Animals tried to get involved but the NWO punked them too... Gene interviewed Luger and Liz. Luger was dressed up as Sting and did the worst impersonation ever, which is quite a feat since Nash did several this year. Then the lights went out, and when they came back on, Gene was gone and black roses were shown in his place. I thought Gene had died. The announcers said this must have something to do with Sting. OK... Harris Twins d. Meng & Fit Finley—COR. You won't believe this when I say it, but FINLEY TURNED ON HIS PARTNER. Really. Who can even comprehend such booking

genius? Finley and Meng brawled away so the Harris' won via countout... Three-count came out and danced. Vampiro attacked them. I thought this was just another run-in, but it turned out to be a stroke of genius as VAMPIRO WAS EVAN'S PARTNER, AND HE ATTACKED HIM. Who would have ever thought? David Flair & Crowbar beat Vamp & Evan in a total mess. I will say, however, that David Flair is definitely improving and has a perversely entertaining chemistry with Crowbar and Daphne. Also, David has the most fly dancing in all of wrestling, surpassing even Too Cool. After the match, Lenny and Lodi came out as Standards and Practices with a tall, leggy blonde, who I believe was Skye of the Nitro Girls. They said this crazy behavior could not continue. So David and Crowbar beat them up. I still can't decide whether this was horrible or not. It WAS horrible, but it was also something I could have watched three or four times and still been entertained by... Buff Bagwell & Kanyon beat Big Vito & Disco Inferno. What a startling coincidence that, by luck of the draw, Vito and Disco ended up as Tag Team partners. Everything was going well until KANYON TURNED ON HIS PARTNER and walked out. I'm not making one single thing in this report up. Buff beat both guys by himself to advance... Nash came down to the ring and said Scott wasn't there yet. He claimed he had the flu and couldn't wrestle. Wall & Sid came out to wrestle him. I am dumbfounded at the fact that Sid and Wall formed a team last week and, by sheer coincidence, they were teamed together as the result of a perfectly random drawing. Wall took his shirt off for the first time and my advice is that he should put it back on immediately and never remove it again. Nash pinned Wall after a bat shot. So here's my question. If Hall is out of action with knee surgery for two months, WHY ADVANCE HIS TEAM IN THE GODDAMN TOURNAMENT? I guess that's why Vince Russo is the booking genius and I'm just here writing a newsletter. NWO attacked Sid after, but Chris Benoit made the save. Scott Steiner then limped down to the ring heroically with a bat. He told Sid to powerbomb Jarrett. Sid started to do so and STEINER NAILED HIM WITH THE BAT. It was a swerve all along. Steiner took off his top to reveal an NWO shirt. Well, "Scott" showed up all right. This was actually set up perfectly with news of his "retirement" leaking out on the WCW Hotline and Vince Russo claiming that the NWO would remain a small core group with only four guys. To his credit, Steiner did a FANTASTIC acting job on this show. The bad guys then stuffed Sid in his car and drove it backstage. Bret then hopped into the NWO Monster Truck and ran the car over. So Sid is dead I guess. I expect Sid to be miraculously healed by Thunder, because as everyone knows, nobody really dies in pro-wrestling.

## ECW News and Notes

- Chris Candido and Tammy Sytch told friends last week that Paul Heyman "fired them over the Internet". They said Paul never called them personally to tell them they were being released. Heyman says he left several messages asking for them to get hold of him, but they never returned his calls. Either way, they're still fired.
- As expected, Mike Awesome regained the ECW Title from Masato Tanaka at the White Plains TNN tapings (see below).

## ECW On Tour

White Plains, NY (December 22 — TNN Tapings): Kintaru Kanemura d. CW Anderson, Super Calo d. Super Crazy, Danny Doring & Roadkill d. Dave Cash & Nova and the Dupps in a three-way, Raven d. Mikey Whipwreck, Yoshihiro Tajiri d. Super Crazy, Baldies d. New Jack & Balls Mahoney & Axl Rotten, Sabu d. Rhino & Sandman in a three-way, Mike Awesome d. Masato Tanaka to regain the ECW World Title. Said to be another great match. Spike Dudley ran out afterwards but Awesome destroyed him as well. Justin Credible d. Tommy Dreamer in a Stairway to Hell ladder match, Rob Van Dam d. Jerry Lynn to retain the TV Title. This was said to be a very good show. They announced that Hardcore Heaven would air from the Civic Center on May 14th. Paul Heyman grew up just a few miles down the road and all of his childhood friends were at this show. As a result, he booked everyone with their best opponent to ensure that all the matches would be as good as possible. That's also the reason he gave Masato Tanaka the title in Nashville. He wanted to do something where he could have a title change in White Plains, but he didn't want to have Tanaka win it here and then leave for Japan for a month. Don't expect quicky title changes to happen regularly in ECW, since Heyman has a clue about how to protect titles. The band Dope also performed live at this show. They were said to be dope.

## ECW On Television

ECW on TNN (December 24 — Taped): Joey Styles and Joel Gertner opened up the show. Cyrus interrupted them. He said the office hated Joel's spiels and that they needed to do the intro all over again. Crowd booed. Gertner said the gig was up and revealed that there was no ECW office. Joey backed him up. Cyrus then said he wasn't talking about the ECW office, he was talking about the TNN office. More boos. Cyrus said he was taking over and called out Masato Tanaka. Uh oh, I sense another Paul Heyman Special. Jeff Jones then hit the ring and said Tanaka had to beat him in order to get a shot at Awesome. So guess what happened? Whatever you guessed, it was wrong, because what really happened was Spike Dudley came out and gave Jones an Acid Drop (the move, not a hit). Awesome then hit the ring. Spike tried to give him an Acid Drop as well but Awesome threw him off and kicked the hell out of him. Awesome pressed Spike over his head and tossed him into the first row. Tanaka then hit the ring and they brawled. Keep in mind, this was all one big angle that started with Joey opening the show. Security tried to break up the fight. Paul Heyman ran out and said the match had to wait until next week's show. Cyrus pleaded with Heyman to just give the fans what they want. Paul said OK. However, instead of giving the fans what they wanted, which is waifish chicks with naked boobs, he gave them a wrestling match. Most of the crowd still popped. Tanaka ended up pinning Awesome in a totally killer match with what Joey Styles called a "roaring elbow", which is a move that anyone with scant knowledge of Japanese pro-wrestling would identify as a "rolling elbow". TNN apparently felt it would add to the match to incorporate three extended commercial breaks into the action. Awesome shook hands with Tanaka after the match and put the belt around his waist. Then he clotheslined him to near unconsciousness and gave him a powerbomb over the top rope and through a table. Awesome then went backstage and



screamed at Cyrus. Awesome said he was going to screw up the FMW/ECW relationship once and for all by literally killing Tanaka the next time they wrestled. This show was the STUFF up to this point... Rhino and Steve Corino beat up Balls and Axl backstage. We didn't need this crap here... Super Crazy killed Ikuto Hidaka with a spider bomb in another great match. Every week I become more and more impressed with the Greatness That Is Super Crazy. Hidaka is a great athlete and has some really good flying moves, but his basics are a bit sub-par. Not at the level of an Aguila, but definitely below some of the other awesome Junior Heavyweights on this planet. In a few years, he's going to be the STUFF... Impact Players cut a horrible promo backstage... Dreamer & Raven NC Baldies when the Impact Players ran in. They destroyed Raven and then caned him almost to death. Gertner astutely noted that Francine was more concerned about Raven than she was about Dreamer. Let's see if I can book this angle. Raven hates Dreamer for literally years. Suddenly, they're good friends and are getting along. Raven then steals Dreamer's chick and Dreamer finally hates him enough to want to kill him. Sounds good to me. This show ruled it and was probably the best episode to date.

Etcetera

- If you are receiving this newsletter after January 1, 2000, then it means the postal service was properly prepared for Y2K. If you have not received it yet, how in the hell are you reading this?
- I came across a list of carny terms last week, many of which ended up becoming used in the wrestling industry as well. I noticed a couple of terms that seem to be used in the wrong context nowadays. For example, the word "shill" used to be used pretty much the same way we use "plant" nowadays. If a new ride seemed particularly foreboding, and the marks were hesitant to go on it, the carnival would hire "shills" to come out of the crowd, pay for a ticket, and then go on the ride to entice others to do so. So people who call Bob Ryder or Mark Madden "shills" for WCW are all wrong. Now, if I secretly worked for WCW and casually dropped hints in this newsletter enticing people to buy the PPVs and go to the house shows, I would be a shill. The term "cop-out" comes from the carny term "cop", which means to cheat a mark. The term "gaff", which in wrestling usually means to blade, originally just meant anything fake. A mermaid that was constructed by sewing the top half of a shaved monkey onto the bottom half of a fish was a "gaff". The term "fixed" also very specifically required that a person be paid off to become involved in illegal activity. So a "fixed" fight or boxing match requires that the promotor pay off either one or both participants to throw the bout. In other words, if two guys in UFC decided to work a match on their own without the knowledge of a promotor, it wouldn't technically be considered a fixed fight. Also, if a promotor told one fighter to throw a match or lose his job, but didn't pay him anything extra to do it, I guess technically that wouldn't be a "fixed" fight either. Obviously, I had a little extra space in this week's issue.
- Make sure you check out the "Off the Top Rope" radio show if you live in the Chicago area, hosted by our good buddy Brian Schenk. It currently airs from 7:00 to 8:30 AM on WEEF AM 1430 every Saturday morning. Brian is also selling tapes of his show, and you can receive a

sample copy for \$2 to PO Box 6082, Lindenhurst, IL 60046. For more information, you can e.mail Brian at his new e.mail address: [offthetoprope@mailcity.com](mailto:offthetoprope@mailcity.com).

- Thanks for reading this week!

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